



NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR COLEEN J. SENG



www.ci.lincoln.ne.us

Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission 440 S. 8th St., Ste. 100 Lincoln NE 68508-2294 402/441-7716 FAX 402/441-6824

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
FOR MORE INFORMATION:

February 10, 2006
Bonnie Coffey, 441-8695
Diane Mullins, 441-7717
*Winners' pictures available upon request

WOMEN'S COMMISSION HONORS AWARD RECIPIENTS

"Weaving Women's Voices" pays tribute to annual award winners in saluting of International Women's Day

The Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission (LLWC), along with Friends of the LLWC, will host an awards luncheon in recognition of International Women's Day to celebrate its 30th anniversary, "***Weaving Women's Voices***." Scheduled for Friday, March 10, 2006, the event will be held at the Cornhusker Hotel, 333 South 13th Street., Lincoln, NE. Doors open at 11 a.m. and the program starts promptly at 11:30 a.m.

Mayor Coleen J. Seng will present an International Women's Day proclamation and First Lady Sally Ganem will present an Admiralship in the Nebraska Navy to **Ms. Shinae Chun**, Director of the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau in Washington, DC.

On May 9, 2001, Chun was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the 15th Director of the Women's Bureau. Serving under Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao, Ms. Chun is President Bush's highest ranking Korean American appointee, and heads the only Federal agency charged with advocating on behalf of women in the workforce. During her tenure she has transformed the way the Women's Bureau does business through innovative projects and increasing partnerships. Under her leadership, the Women's Bureau strives to advance the status of 21st Century working women in the pursuit of better jobs, better earnings and a better Living.

She has received the "Alumni Merit Award" from Northwestern University and the "Outstanding Alumni Award" from Ewha Womans University; the Business Women's Network "Special Achievement for Leadership Award;" the Southern Women in Public Service "Pacesetter Award;" and the Asian American Coalition of Chicago "Excellence in Public Service Award." She is author of *From the Mountains of Masan to the Land of Lincoln* (1996).

The Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission is pleased to announce the following award recipients:

- The ***Alice Paul Award*** is presented to a woman whose life's work reflects her dedication to the struggle for women's equality. **Sen. DiAnna Schimek** has been a state senator representing District 27 in the Nebraska Legislature since 1989. She serves on the Legislature's Committee on Committees, the Business and Labor Committee and the Urban Affairs Committee, and she chairs the Government, Military and Veteran's Affairs Committee. She is a former member of the Legislature's Executive Board and served as vice-chair of the Legislature's Reapportionment Task Force in 2001. Sen. Schimek's legislative priorities during her years of service have been in the areas of children and families, health care, election law, Indian issues and consumer protection. Sen. Schimek is the past chair of the Midwestern Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG) and serves on its Executive Committee. In 1999, she was selected as a Toll Fellow by CSG. In 2003, she was appointed co-chair of the Intergovernmental

Affairs Committee of the Council of State Governments, and serves on the Executive Committee of CSG. In 2000, Sen. Schimek was appointed by the Governor to the Women's Health Advisory Council. In 2001, she was appointed by the Legislature to serve on the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission. In 2001-02, she chaired the National Conference of State Legislatures' Task Force on Initiative & Referendum. Sen. Schimek has been involved in many community organizations including the Southwest Business and Civic Association, P.E.O., Downtown Rotary Club, and Soroptimist. In 1989, Sen. Schimek received the University of Nebraska at Kearney's Outstanding Alumni Award. She is an honorary member of Mortar Board and Delta Kappa Gamma. She was named Woman of the Year by the NOVA Chapter of Business and Professional Women in 1999; Woman of Distinction by Soroptimists of Lincoln; Distinguished Service Award by the National Guard Association of Nebraska in 2000; Legislator of the Year Award by the Nebraska Dental Hygienist Association in 2001; and the Distinguished Service Award by the Nebraska League of Municipalities in 2002. The Lincoln Interfaith Council presented the Interfaith Leadership Award to Sen. Schimek in 2003. The ARC of Nebraska presented the Harold Sieck Award in 2004. Among many bills affecting women's issues, she cosponsored or sponsored seven bills that have been enacted into law:

LB 68 - Provided mandated insurance coverage for breast and cervical cancer for women over 35

LB 228 - Adopted the Address Confidentiality Act for victims of domestic abuse

LB256 - Provided statewide program for mammography screening for low income women

LB 303 - Changed provisions related to judicial nominating commissions, more women judges names were sent to the governor

LB 480 - Created the women's Health Initiative of Nebraska, creating the Office of Women's Health

LB 1098 - Provided for the crime of stalking

LB 1213 - Provided payment of forensic examination for sexual assault victims

LB 1322 - Created the Nebraska Affordable Housing Act

Sen. Schimek embodies the spirit of the Alice Paul Award. Her life reflects a strong steadfast commitment to women's rights. She has dedicated her career of public service to addressing the needs of those who are traditionally underrepresented, especially women and children.

- The ***Erasmus Correll Award*** is presented to a man who has exhibited outstanding commitment through his individual leadership and community involvement to the issues that affect women, who has encouraged and supported women in their pursuit of equal status, and who has enhanced women's quality of life. **Mr. Milo Mumgaard**, executive director for the Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest, has pioneered its direction since its inception in 1996 by leaders of the Nebraska Bar Association. Under his leadership, the center successfully litigated the return of transitional Medicaid coverage to more than 10,000 working Nebraska families in the wake of state budget cuts, most of which are headed by single mothers. He also navigated the center's work to return millions of dollars in the unlawful denial of benefits to more than 1,000 disabled mothers in a case that was the first in the nation to successfully challenge a punitive vestige of welfare reform known as the "family cap." He successfully argued to reunify the family of an undocumented mother from Guatemala and established a path breaking legal precedent requiring that all families, regardless of immigration status, be provided full due process rights within the child protection system. Mumgaard took the lead in bring together a groups of hundreds of low-income working women who had been denied assistance under the state's child care subsidy program. These women banded together to form the Working Mom's Safe Kids Coalition. The coalition fought for the preservation of benefits in order to continue working while in transition from public benefits to self-sufficiency. Mumgaard has dedicated his entire professional career to eliminating poverty and alleviating its effects for low income families. He has worked tirelessly for equal opportunity for newcomer populations and to ensure public policies assist communities to effective and efficiently integrate newcomers into our state.

He operates an open door policy in mentoring law students and social work students in understanding the importance of advocacy for underrepresented individuals and groups.

- The ***Woman Artist - Visual Arts*** will be presented to a local woman artist who excels in her work as deemed by peers and colleagues. Water color artist, **Karen Dienstbier** was selected for the Woman Artist award for her dedication and support to the arts, and women's issues. She has been publicly and privately teaching art for the past two decades, and stands as Artist-In-Residence at several colleges across the nation. She has received multiple recognitions and awards for her work locally, nationally and internationally. Her art work has been seen in 34 juried shows in 11 states, 20 group invitational exhibits in Nebraska and 21 in other states. Her paintings appear in 29 corporate collections in six states including the Great Plains Studies Art Collection at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Pillsbury's International Headquarters in Minneapolis; 17 one-person shows including the Nebraska Governor's Mansion, the Stuhr Museum, Sioux City Art Center, Bannister Gallery of Rhode Island College and the Museum of Nebraska Art. For several years, she coordinated a regular informal group of women artists to support their endeavors and original works. She belongs to a number of women advocacy groups, including Friends of LLWC. Her activism spans the roles of artist, teacher and supporter. She currently supported the Haydon Gallery as an artist advisor and Education Committee member. Karen is very supportive of women, their art and efforts to equality. Her personal endeavors exemplify the adage of women helping women as she teaches English for the Sundaese community at the Lincoln Literacy Council.
- Formerly known as the Young Feminist Award, the ***Sojourner Truth Award*** is a rotating award accomplished by women, from ages 14 to 40, who through actions or example, attempts to enhance the quality of life for girls or women in Lincoln or Lancaster County. Union College student and writer for the college's newspaper, *The Clocktower*, **Kate Simmons** enlightens her peers on the true meaning of feminism while advocating women's equality in college, in the church and in the work place. She is an member of Amnesty International and the Peace & Social Justice club. In her spare time, she teaches English to political refugees and immigrants through her involvement with Lincoln Community Gardens program. In the words of her nominator, Mark Robinson, "Even though she is not enrolled in (my) class currently, I have had at least one student cite Kate as instrumental in *his* adopting a feminist stance."

For more information or to make reservations, contact the Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission, 441-7717. These recipients will be honored for their professional and/or personal efforts in promoting opportunities for women, improving the quality of life and making an impact on women's issues in the community. LLWC was formed in 1976 and works to assure that the women of Lincoln and Lancaster County have full participation on the issues that have an impact on their lives.